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Gissaka, a war in which he was killed, had designated as regent of his son Kyilima Rugwe, an Umunyginya called Chyenge, and not one of his brothers-in-law.

meetings of the Council of Ministers until her son is about fifteen years old, an age at which he can exercise supreme authority. Formerly, the Mwami's maternal uncles, taking advantage of his youth and their own privileged position, would often have recourse to violence and trickery in order to increase their provinces and their herds.

11. Political Divisions

631 The characteristic traits of feudalism are found in Ruanda. The dispersion of authority and property and the Mwami's bestowing on his subjects benefits and commands that are always revocable, result in great uncertainty for everyone and permit the king to establish his domination firmly over the country.

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631 Ruanda is divided into provinces (intara) placed under the command of a single chief (umutware w'intebe) (2). There are

2. Intebe, stool-seat.

exceptions to this rule. In Bgishaza, for example, two different chiefs are placed under the orders of the umutware w'intebe, the umutware w'ubutaka who exerts his authority over the lands and the Bahutu, and the umutware w'umukenke who governs the pastures, the herds, and the Batutsi. The abatware are appointed by the Mwami. They do not necessarily belong to the first families of the country. An average Mututsi or even a Muhutu may become a chief, thanks to royal favor that rewards his intelligence and devotion. [99]

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701 In the past, at the time of the wars, the Mwami's abapfumu chose from among the abatware w'intebe the umugabe w'ingabo (chief of the army). When peace was concluded, the latter remained what he had been before.

631 635 There are abatware who personally own hills in other provinces (1).

1. Since 1924, aiming to unify the commands of the provincial chiefs, the government has endeavored to persuade the abatware to exchange hills.

634 The abatchibiri, who own only a part of a province, are also directly subordinate to the Mwami, who has given them their lands.

622 562 624 The ibisonga are placed at the head of one or more hills. They are the supervisors of the abatware and the abachibiri, on whom they also spy for the Mwami. Women can be ibisonga. For example, they can be the Mwami's abaja (mistress-servants) who, as a reward for the bestowal of their favors, are given a hill. But the most frequent case is that of a widow of an igisonga [sic] without any male children who, while attending the king, obtains permission to continue to manage the hill held by her husband (2). Each hill chief has

2. An example would be Nyiraigweni, widow of Nyantabana, a great provincial chief, replaced today by Rwabutogo who commands the district of Buganza in the territory of Nyanza.

under him a factotum called umuhingisha who designates and marks the boundaries of the fields, for which the Bahutu have asked the chief, and who may even settle the palavers in the absence of the igisonga. The umunyabigega is hierarchically subordinate to the former igisonga. He is the steward of the granaries (ibigega) of the chief whose cultivated fields he supervises.

631 622 The abanyabikingi command only a portion, a spur of a hill. Appointed directly by the Mwami, they act as supervisors, and even as spies of the ibisonga for the king. [100]

144 changes occurred; the ethnic character of the Barundi changes only slightly, in spite of the fact also that political connections with the Mountain Barundi had become much less close.

●681 [12] In 1901 Richard Kandt wrote as follows of the Barundi of the Tanganyika lowlands.

"Politically the area between the eastern periphery of the Central African graben and the Ruzizi is divided into from ten to twelve rather small sultanates, most of which probably cover approximately 150 to 200 square kilometers. They are nominally not independent; their rulers, who all belong to the Semitic Watussi of the Galla territories south of Abyssinia, were originally vassals of the king of Urundi, or the 'Muesi' as he is called by title. But although the majority of the inhabitants gives the impression of being almost pure Warundi, the high crest of the peripheral mountains and the broad desolate primeval forest were too convenient a bulwark not to arouse the desire of independence in the population which is hardly affected by grandiose ideas of national unity, the more so since the mother country is also split up into a large number of mutually warring chiefdoms which are only loosely bound to the central power. The only existing remnant of cohesion seems to be the fact that the Muesi has some kind of religious importance which makes his chief think it advisable not to sever all connections with him.

182 If we consider how infinitely different the entire living conditions of the Lake Warundi dwelling near Tanganyika are from those of the Mountain Warundi and how far back the various influences go which affect the Lake Warundi (namely, the presence of the Wasuaheli [Swahili], the Arabs, and the various western tribes following in their footsteps), we are surprised at how stubbornly they have nevertheless remained true in the matter of their external appearance, language, and customs to the peculiarities of their unusually isolated native country. The same is true of the Warundi living in the low valley of the Ruzizi, except that for them the temptation to abandon the customs of their forefathers was considerably smaller, and the farther north they lived, the smaller it became." (No. 22, pp. 339-340.)

644 to the royal court because, due to some suspicion or other, the king wants to have them near him and under his supervision.

635 In Urundi these provincial governors are almost without
565 exception members of the royal family (abaganwa) or of one of the kin groups of the high Bahima nobility related to the king by marriage (see pp. 91, 101 also p. 182 of original text [not translated]). However, in the subdistricts of the provinces
634 ordinary Batussi are appointed as government officials (abatware or batwale). Sometimes, especially in the southeast, there are also Bahutu serving as batwale. This office is hereditary within the appointed families, but the king may annul the succession by inheritance of a son after the death of a mutwale. Also, he may appoint a new mutwale any time he pleases (No. 19, p. 267).

● 631 The same organization of officialdom also exists in
614 Ruanda. Similarly, in Ankole the entire country is divided
[635] among nine governors or high batwale responsible to the king. There they carry the title Bakungu and are all members of the royal clan, [89] Abahinda. Each Mukungu has several district
[634] chiefs under him. However, these are all representatives of Bahima clans and each of them is elected by his clan which means that he is the eldest of the clan. These men have petty jurisdiction over their clan members, while disputes between different clans are decided by the Mukungu. The office of
[635] Mukungu is hereditary. (No. 27, p. 98.)

643 In Urundi, however, the monarchy is not, or not yet, as
614 well founded as in Ruanda (King Musinga). The cause for this may be found, above all, in the much stronger spirit of independence of the Barundi and in the still very strong clan organization of the Batussi and the Bahutu. However, the kings of Urundi and their powerful kin group, the Baganwa clan, have managed in the last two decades to have almost all the clan elders in the country, who formerly had a free hand, replaced by officials and vassals of the king who back up his absolute power.

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As in Ruanda and the other Bahima states, from Unjoro in the north to Ufipa in the south (No. 47, p. 74), all the land, people, and cattle in Urundi belong to the king on the basis of his inherited right as conqueror. He distributes the land among the members of his family and his clan, the Baganwa, as a hereditary fief. He may reclaim it, however, if at any time he is dissatisfied with the holder. These grand vassals or grand batwale again subdivide their territory in many small fiefs among their followers, and these continue the process so that the entire country is covered by a gigantic network of vassals of the king (see p. 171 [not translated]). They are predominantly Batussi, and the lowest among them have approximately the position of a village mayor. The smallest territorial unit of this large administrative organization is the [361] mountain, the plateau ridge (umutumba, umurambi). In the highlands which are cut up by swampy valleys, the mountains bear the settlements, not the valleys. For this reason the boundaries of the provinces and their subdivisions are formed almost everywhere by the stream and river valleys, the most obvious and most effective natural lines of separation between the regions and their inhabitants. However, the large fiefs seldom consist of one continuous stretch of land within a region; almost always they are formed by numerous smaller pieces of territory distributed over various provinces. Thus, the important vassals are prevented from becoming too powerful for the king.

Of course, all vassals are expected to pay a certain amount of tribute to the king. From these the latter meets the expenses of his large household, pays his officials, and conducts his wars. Depending on the duties involved, there are three kinds of feudal tenure. 1) Land fiefs: their holders have to pay regularly a certain share of the produce of their fields to the king. 2) Cattle fiefs: the tenants monthly furnish a certain number of cattle, milk, and butter. 3) War fiefs: the holders must keep ready for action a certain number of warriors who must be placed at the king's disposal upon his command. Sometimes these three types of feudal tenure are combined in one region and in the

643 person of one vassal. This simplifies the administration con-
631 siderably. Often, however, the vassal is vested with the tenure
423 of the mountain and the Bahutu who live there as his bondsmen, but he does not receive at the same time all the privileges; another Mutussi may receive the war fief on the same mountain, i.e., he may have the duty of assembling the local men in case of war, or a third Mutussi on this mountain may be in charge of dividing up the grazing land, etc. [90] The object and result of this organization is to make each of the holders of these privileges jealously watch over the others and to insure that the king keeps the reins of power firmly in his hands.

634 The mutwale who has been vested with a fief is, however,
614 the ruler of the Bahutu and Batwa in his feudal domain. He determines the work load of his people and has jurisdiction over ordinary affairs. However, the position of the people under him is not at all like slavery. They enjoy a considerable amount of freedom and are entitled to certain privileges. In addition
[628] they always have as support their kin group, their clan, which can be depended upon to take secret, bloody revenge for any real acts of violence on the part of the batwale or any other person. It is a kind of Vehmic organization which is respected even by the most powerful Batussi batwale. Also, each Muhutu is entitled to leave his feudal lord if the latter maltreats him and to look for a new master. However, since the reputation
[554] and wealth of each Mutussi depends chiefly on how many people he has, it is in his own interests to see to it that his people do not leave him as a result of maltreatment.

662 The king always surrounds the high vassals and batwale with spies in order not to allow them to become too independent. Beyond that, however, jealousy and envy are powerful motives for each mutwale to exercise a check on his neighbor. Naturally intrigue and incrimination are widespread. If a case of dis-
687 loyalty or high treason is reported to the king and is discovered to be well-founded, royal justice acts quickly with spear and poison. Nevertheless, several grand batwale have managed to
631 attain a large degree of independence in the course of time. This is particularly true of those living in the exposed border

631 districts in the area adjoining Ruanda and Ussuwi. They still pay a set amount of tribute in natural produce to the king, but otherwise they may do, or not do, whatever they please unless they disturb the peace or necessitate the military intervention of our Resident.

As a rule the king or the princely governor will not make alternations in the conditions of feudal tenure if the vassal regularly sends his tribute, keeps his subjects in timorous dependence, promptly contributes the necessary groups of men in case of war, and remains subservient and loyal to the king.

[624] Finally, in the different villages and hamlets there are communal officials (bisonga) who are responsible to the batwale; they collect the taxes, arrange for corvée labor, and are in charge of petty jurisdiction, etc.

645 634 When discussing important matters, the king, also the provincial governors, and the batwale, are assisted by a state council or a communal council, respectively. These councils are appointed by the king or by the governor, as the case may be, and are chosen from among the most respected and most prosperous men of the country or of the region. Represented among them particularly are the clan elders (abagabo). The council is convened on important occasions, and the king or the mutwale presides, but in his decisions the king or the mutwale is not bound by the advice of the council (No. 19, p. 267). The

634 641 batwale are responsible to the king for everything that happens in their administrative district. They also have almost absolute power over the Bahutu and Batwa population which they administer. This includes the power of execution. It is true that subjects suppressed by an unjust mutwale may appeal to the provincial governor or to the king, but they obtain satisfaction only very seldom, for "the tsar is far away and the sky is high." [91]

643 641 The absolute ruler, the semidivine king is, of course, always right and has every privilege; he owns all the land and all the cattle, and he vests with it whomever he chooses, whenever he chooses, and in amounts that he alone decides, and he may take any subject's life or property as he pleases.

643 631 These are the conditions, de jure and de facto, whenever the king is a man of strong will, and there has been a whole

643 series of such kings in Urundi. If the king is a weakling, if he
631 lacks the cunning and the capacity for violence and cruelty to inspire fear, which are the necessary characteristics of African rulers -- as, for example, the present weak King Mütaga -- his absolutism is mere show. Then the real rulers are the heads of the royal family, the Baganwa or Abaganwa, who make the royal puppet dance to their tune. These, then, are times when the various provincial governors make themselves independent, when other parts of the country fall under the rule of foreign neighboring sultans (for example, Ujogoma temporarily under Ussuwi), and when anarchy more or less prevails in the entire realm. Concerning the development of these conditions and the present state of affairs, see the chapter, "History," p. 151 ff. [not translated].

648 The present impotence of the monarchy, the weakening
648 of central power, and the disruption of the formerly powerful unified realm have been sanctioned by the German colonial government to its own advantage. At the same time the colonial government is attempting to replace gradually the supreme power of the king with the rule of the German Resident. It cannot eliminate the monarchy as such unless it is prepared to take up the fight against all the Batussi. For this our strength is still not sufficient. However, in the future much will depend on what kind of a man from the old ruling dynasty succeeds the present weak puppet king, Mutaga, and what the attitude of our government to him will be.

643 The succession to the throne is determined by primogeniture
662 in Urundi, unless the king or the head chief decides otherwise. By law he is succeeded by the oldest son of his head wife. Usually, however, the king designates as his successor the one of his many sons who appears most suitable to him, and he bequeathes to him the insignia of royalty, i.e., the holy drum, his spear, and his arm ring. If this decision is made during the lifetime of the king, it is dangerous for the favored son. He will consider it advisable to escape from the jealousy of his brothers and relatives by taking refuge in some distant place until his time comes. If he is still a child, he is hidden by his mother far out of reach

643 796 between the various elements of the people; it was supposed to be a large contribution to the land's fertility and the country's welfare, and in all this the part played by the king was prominent.

643 631 Only in fact was the king's power limited. He transferred the leadership of parts of his sultanates to some chiefs, almost in every case relatives (brothers, uncles, cousins), members of the royal family (*bapfura*). In their turn these would establish subchiefs chosen among their relatives, or the aristocracy (*bafûzwi*), or even Batutsi commoners, but seldom among the Bahutu. The division reached very far and the last elements of it were not only single hills, but even parts of a hill. And although the ensuing intrication and divided hierarchy remind us forcibly of our own feudo-vassalic middle ages, and appear consequently most unstable, the Barundi system, if we set aside some violent revolutions, possessed some sort of stability and could carry on thanks to its practically hereditary organization. Chiefs, subchiefs and all who had availed themselves of the deep-seated division of authority were naturally possessed of rights over the common people and were entitled to demand from them various privileges, usually defined by local custom, and which ranged from a present of beer to well-determined contributions or vague corvées (services).

423 661 Some scholars have maintained that the *mwami* definitely had a right of possession over the land of the whole of his sultanate. But the truth is that land was not an object of property for the *mwami*, or for commoners and the *mwami* and his representatives simply had to allow its utilization and choose the people to carry it out. Such designations were, just as the political leaderships, more or less unstable, more or less precarious; there exists a heredity in fact; but it is possible for a chief, should he care to do so, to eject the tenants. Besides, the abandoned or untilled lands are at his disposal. The system in general enables members of the leading classes as well as members of the subject classes to constitute estates with the only difference that the former will possess large herds of cattle and have their lands tilled by people liable to unpaid service while the latter have only very few cows and must depend on their own labour and that of their families.

The political leader's say in agricultural matters also solves the difficult problem of proportioning field and pasture-lands. The chief will not allow the latter to be reduced, and the threat to the cattle-breeder is further avoided by the chief's right to use the sorghum fields for pastures after the harvest (*ibishaka-shaka*) either for themselves or for others.

423 The territory of an important chief, with its intermixing complex of herds, estates, revenues, and services, very often extended over large, sometimes

[p.14 (8)]

224 They climb trees like squirrels to escape danger or to be on the lookout.
[48] They may spend a week or even two without returning home when tracking game, especially if an elephant is at stake. The wooded area is their domain. They know its thickets and crannies, and they track animals everywhere, stealthily through thorns and scrub, without ever running the risk of getting lost.

361 Pygmies live in groups of six or seven families scattered through
423 the forest, which they have divided up like family property by settling their respective boundaries so as not to get in each other's way.

578 Hunting in a forbidden zone or even in a contested one has given rise to more than one bloody quarrel among brothers and friends.

There are hardly 15 of such groups of Negrillo hunters, who would find it hard to subsist if meat were their only food.

311 Willfully set fires for clearing purposes which have impoverished the forested land, as well as new political conditions which are gradually transforming the society, contribute to the dwindling of their food resources.

Soon, therefore, we may see the last representatives of those woodsmen join their other compatriots, the potters scattered through the Bahutu villages, or else start farming as some of them are already doing.

563 The Batwa live as a group apart. They do not mix with the Bahutu and much less with the Batutsi. They are a despised caste.

631 Ruanda was not politically united from the beginning. In the following pages we shall see that it was parceled /37/ into a considerable number of tiny kingdoms and small independent principalities. The lands inhabited for the longest time seem to have been the Ndorwa, Buganza, Gissaka, and Bugessera in the northeast, the Nduga and Munyambiriri in the center, and the Bwana-Mkali in the southeast. The areas located in the northwest, the Mulera, Bugoyi, Bgisha, Kanage, etc., were slowly won over the forest and settled by people who came from neighboring regions.

642 Politically, Ruanda is an absolute monarchy.

The Banyarwanda belong to the type of society that is "more stratified, characterized by the establishment of a centralized power whose automatically binding warrants are transmitted to the humblest

[i.e., the Batwa. - Analyst]

642 individuals through a continuous chain of lesser chiefs." This regime resulted from the invasion and conquest of Ruanda by the Hamites. The monarchical system was introduced by them in order "to keep the subject people within a very tight administrative network." (1) Ac-

1. Les Relations entre l'évolution sociale et l'évolution religieuse /The Relations between Social and Religious Evolution/ by Rev. Fr. Pinard de la Boullaye, S. J. (Correspondant, January 25, 1929.)

cording to the classification adopted by Deniker (2), the Banyarwanda

2. Races et peuples de la terre /Races and Peoples of the Earth/, 1900, p. 151.
Deniker divides peoples into savage, semicivilized, and civilized.

belong in their degree of culture to the first group by the Bahutu and Batwa, but it is also proper to place them in the second category on account of the Hamites, who gave their conquered subjects an organization superior to that of the peoples in the first stage and a higher degree of culture. They form an intermediate group between the first two divisions of this classification.

643 The land is governed by a king with unlimited and hereditary powers (we are speaking of the past). The symbol of royalty is a drum, a sacred object, a sort of palladium referred to as Kalinga. /38/

Like all African potentates, the Hamitic prince formerly held powers of life and death over his subjects. Everything belonged to him in his own right, lands and people, crops and livestock. He
● 631 would designate the dignitaries and the provincial governors, who were almost invariably chosen from the ranks of the Batutsi, the noble and conquering race.

631 These in turn would select their own assistants, who became "hill chiefs." The great chiefs, although they owned a number of dwellings in their respective districts, seldom lived among their people.

[662] Ever surrounded by jealous and often malevolent rivals, they were exposed to intrigues. Espionage and delation were endemic at court. This is why the great dignitaries remained by the king's side in order to guard against all eventualities.

643 Hamitic royalty, once it became powerful, immediately acquired great brilliance. United under a single scepter, the Banyarwanda became one of the best-organized Negro peoples and spread beyond their natural boundaries to defeat and subject to tribute the enemy nations around them. The union of the Bahutu clans took place thanks to the increasingly centralized administrative organization of the new inhabitants.

The Hamitic kings never lost the simplicity of their ancient mores. They kept up their interest in their herds of cattle, which they regularly asked to see, and they would ask and remember the names and genealogy of the animals. On the battlefields they were hardly distinguishable from their warriors, whose outfit and weapons they wore: a mere goatskin around the loins, a spear, a bow and arrows.

644 In peacetime, however, etiquette would elevate the monarch and isolate him from his subjects. One could not visit him without asking for an audience and being announced first. This was so at least as far as common people were concerned, for dignitaries and favorites acted with greater freedom and even took certain liberties. According to court protocol, one had /39/ to clap hands (gukom' amashi) when appearing before the monarch.

The "lords" would throng around him to fill out the government offices and to make up the court (1). Not only were princes of royal

1. "The Hamitic Court!" In dealing with the persons and times whose history we are describing, one must not think of the courts established in civilized countries. The Batutsi Court does not

634 somewhat different. The most important personality after the chief is his brother. He represents him in all matters. Both of them have their houses in the individual villages in which they live during their journeys. The son ranks just below the brother of his father and is granted a village after he has grown up. He is not entitled to gifts in the other villages of his father, and only if he has [267] no uncle does he get an uncle's rank. In spite of this preference, the brother of the chief is not his heir; all his possessions go to the son after the burial of the father.

622 563 Below the kissonga are the quite unimportant subchiefs who supervise the communities on the separate hills. Among them there are everywhere, especially in Bugoye, many Bahutu, whereas the higher positions are almost always held by Batutsi. It is only in Mulera and Bgisha that one sees Bahutu also occupying the highest positions.

The Bahutu officials are very much praised by their superiors, for no one can be more merciless and servile than an upstart who is hated by his clansmen. This characterization does not, of course, apply to the clan elders who occupy this position in the free farm communities. The subchiefs are the only cattle-owning Bahutu outside of Mulera, Bgisha, and Bugoye.

642 631 There is no doubt that with the extensive interweaving of property belonging to individual high chiefs (in this respect the whole country resembles a village with a community system of planting [Flurzwang]) an influential stratum is created which has vital interests in the most diverse parts of the country. This counteracts the centrifugal, particularistic tendencies of the individual provinces.

642 631 643 These conditions seem to be the result of a conscious aim on the part of the crown. In this direction much seems to have been accomplished by Lwabugiri Kigeri, the father of the present ruler, Musinga. Kigeri is reputed to have centralized the state and partitioned, scattered, and interwoven the holdings of the chiefs in order to destroy the centrifugal tendencies of the feudal lords. This involved him in bitter struggles with the lords, among them his brother-in-law, Kabare, but he managed to crown his efforts with success.

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642 The modern European who is accustomed to sharply demarcated administrative districts and has no idea of social equilibrium based on the interweaving of economic interests finds this principle of administration absurd. That is how Captain Göring (1)

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1. Captain Göring, "Zu den Unruhen in Urundi [On the Unrest in Urundi]," Deutsches Kolonialblatt, 1911, p. 552.

judged conditions in Urundi. He says: "The division of the country is entirely without system. One often finds watuale who own various lands widely separated from each other."

I was told that Lwābugiri's policy is being followed by Musinga. He is said to prefer appointing chiefs who are directly responsible to him and to give them lands. These unimportant, free persons, mindful of the king's protection, form an element [268] independent of and even hostile to the high chiefs. They guard their own interests and resist the particularistic tendencies of the powerful.

This policy tends to erase the boundaries of individual provinces, and one encounters great difficulties if he asks about the political division of the country.

After this brief discussion of the central organization of the state which is made up of the king and a dozen and a half powerful feudal lords, we shall now touch on the political conditions in the individual sections.

The organization of Kissaka has the following pattern. The largest part of the country is divided among three large feudal lords, Kanuma, Niamutezi, and Lutangabo. Their lands are interspersed in such a way that no separate provinces can be formed. This increases their opposition to each other. Hence the dignitaries check on one another and fight one another with accusations and intrigues. In this way mutual control, which is very useful to the state, is established, as well as a quite stable equilibrium.

These three high chiefs of Kissaka live almost constantly at the court of Musinga in Nyanza, and when they obtain permission to visit their holdings, their sons remain behind as valuable hostages, a guarantee against possible separatistic

631 642 tendencies of their fathers. Count Von Götzen (1) mentions

1. Götzen, Count Von, Durch Afrika von Ost nach West [Through Africa from East to West] (Berlin, 1899), pp. 156, 159.

only one governor of Kissaka, namely, Kavahigi, but he also speaks of Kaware (Kabare) in the northern part of the country.

621 631 The hill (kashozi) is the smallest political unit in Kissaka, as well as in all the rest of Ruanda. The inhabitants of a hill belong to different clans, and the factor uniting them is purely [622] political. It is primarily the chief, to whom compulsory service (buletwa) must be paid. This official is likewise appointed by the high chief. However, the very large hills are not infrequently divided into subgroups with different subchiefs. Thus, the hill known as Bare in Nsasa is divided into the communities of Bare, Ishua, Kibare, and some others.

621 614 In Mulera where there are very few Batutsi and these have no great power, much more primitive conditions have been preserved. Here too, however, political units are represented by hills, but each hill has a homogeneous population, consisting of the members of the clan. These communities are directly sub- [657] ordinate to the king and, through their elders, pay taxes to the king's deputies. Here the mutware, the integrating factor, is absent. On the few hills [269] in Mulera belonging to Batutsi, however, we find conditions similar to those in Kissaka. Here, [651] also, taxes are paid to the chiefs and not to the king's deputies. I believe that the Bahutu on these hills must also render compulsory service.

Ndorwa is a country that is only under nominal rule and does not pay taxes to Musinga. We find here the same clan communities, but they are completely independent, small political units.

Besides the two extreme forms, the community settled on alien land granted to the chief by the king, which the chief represents at court, and the free clan community settled on its own land and paying taxes to the king's deputy but having no

9:Maquet E-5 (1949-1951) 1961 FO42 Rundi FO42

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

(*a*) *Districts, hills, and neighbourhoods*

From the point of view of territorial administration, the border zones were distinguished from the rest of the country. Border zones which were permanently threatened by foreign attack were administered by the chief of the army, the headquarters, and camp of which situated in the region. The centre of Ruanda and the regions which were close to a foreign territory not regarded as dangerous were divided into what we shall call administrative districts. There is an almost complete unanimity of informants (97 per cent.) on this.[11]

Unfortunately, there is confusion about the names applied to these areas. Five names were given by informants, with the following percentages: *igikingi* (3 per cent.); *igiti* (19 per cent.), *urugo* (12 per cent.); *umurwa* (7 per cent.); *ubukebe* (24 per cent.). Moreover, the three terms *igikingi*, *igiti*, *urugo* were all used, according to 2 per cent.; *igiti* and *urugo* according to 4 per cent.; *igikingi* and *igiti* according to 6 per cent.; *igiti* and *ubukebe* according to 8 per cent.; *igikingi*, *igiti*, and *ubukebe* according to 1 per cent. Finally, to add to the confusion, the same word was used to mean different but related units. For instance *igikingi* could mean a subdivision of a hill—according to 97 per cent.—and a hill was itself part of a district to which, as we have just indicated, 12 per cent. applied the term *igikingi*.

At all events the whole country was divided into administrative locations that may be designated as districts. Each of them was ruled by two chiefs, neither of them dependent on the other. Their authority extended over the same territory but from different points of view. The land-chief (*umunyabutaka*) took care of the dues from agriculture and the cattle-chief (*umunyamukenke*) of the dues from stock. According to 60 per cent. of our informants, the same person could not have the two charges. It was possible, however, according to 36 per cent. of the Tutsi asked. But the usual situation was to have two chiefs and not a single one.

The district was divided into hills (*umusozi*). At that level the

[11] As has been explained in the introduction, a hundred questions on the political organization have been put to three hundred informants chosen from all the regions of Ruanda (the interviews took place in seventy-four different places). The percentages to be found in that chapter refer to this sample. When the percentages included decimal fractions, the figures have been brought to the nearest unit.

9:Maquet E-5 (1949-1951) 1961 FO42 Rundi FO42

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[Facing P. 102]

9: Maquet E-5 (1949-1951) 1961 FO42 Rundi FO42

probably a little less than a third. For tribute labour, the hill-chief handed over to the residence the number of labourers requested but could have the others to work for himself.

According to respectively 92 and 91 per cent. of the Tutsi interviewed, neither the hill-chief nor the cattle-chief could deduct similar proportions from cattle dues. I have been told, however, that the cattle-chief required from the hill-chief more jars than the royal residence asked. It is very likely that the hill-chief imposed a similar obligation on those who had to bring the milk.

The land-chief acted as judge in disputes about rights over land between Hutu of his district.

Some places were not integrated into the district organization and were free from the cattle- and land-chief interferences. They were the domains belonging to *biru* and the royal funeral grounds. Biru, as we shall see later, were very important people keeping the secret traditions according to which the order of succession of the kings was determined, the ritual to be used in wars, the measures to be taken in times of famine, &c. In their privileged domains biru enjoyed powers similar to those of the king over Ruanda. 76 per cent. of our informants mention the name of a hill ruled by one mwiru (singular of biru) and 79 per cent. affirm that these domains were completely independent of the administrative chiefs.

The other privileged hills were those on which the royal corpses were laid. As the dead body of the king was believed to undergo different metamorphoses, it was not immediately buried, but mummified and left for a certain time in a wood, on the top of a hill. The corpse was watched by some chiefs and servants and finally buried. Even now 88 per cent. of our informants can mention the name of such a hill where a royal cemetery is to be found. One of the more renowned places is Rutare, not far from Kigali, which is mentioned by 71 per cent. 84 per cent. said that these hills were exempted from any tribute to the district residence.

3. ANALYSIS OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

Analysis of the different structures described here will be made from the point of view of the social function of these institutions. Social function is understood here as the contribution made by an institution, an association or a cultural trait to the working and the maintenance of a particular social structure. The contribution may

9:Maquet E-5 (1949-1951)1961 FO42 Rundi FO42

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571
621
631

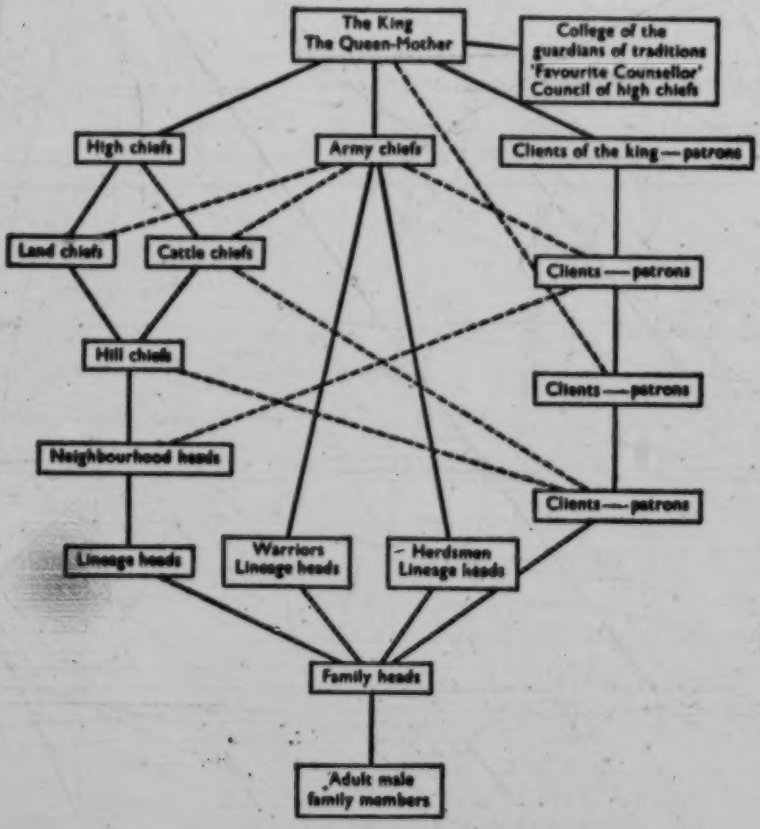

Diagram D.

This diagram suggests the complexity of Ruanda social relations if it is remembered that an individual generally has several political roles. Thus a high chief was very often also an army chief as well as a client of the king, and all the chiefs of the two premier hierarchies had their places in the system of feudal relations as clients and patrons. The broken lines indicate some of these possible pluralities of relationships.

9:Maquet E-5 (1949-1951) 1961 FO42 Rundi FO42

did not play an important part in the feudal system because there were no socially recognized ties between a client and his lord's lord. Feudality was not a ranking system in the same sense as were the political structures. Each lord had his personal following; he was not as such the representative of a higher authority.

To sum up, the political and clientage structures at the same time secured the economic exploitation of the Hutu and protected them against an exaggerated pressure which could have led to disaster for the upper caste.

(c) *Delegation and centralization of political power*

Before the European occupation the kingdom's population was already numerous, probably around 1,700,000 inhabitants. The orographic configuration of the country made communications rather difficult. In that non-literate culture, an efficient collection of tributes required almost a face to face acquaintance between the subject and his ruler. These circumstances necessitated a delegation of authority to many intermediary chiefs who would be the local representatives of the rulers.

But such an unavoidable system was very dangerous for the central government. Its subordinated agents having frequently authority over a rather numerous population which could provide them with abundant supplies (if nothing was sent to the court) could be tempted to isolate themselves completely from the capital and become independent. Such a course of action would have been facilitated by the military structure and the feudal system.

Some important chiefs were, indeed, authorized to raise an army. Moreover, any military chief whose army was encamped near the border, in a district far from the capital, could gain such ascendancy over his warriors as to win over their allegiance to himself.

The *buhake* was perhaps still more dangerous because, as in any feudal system, it created personal bonds of allegiance between the client and his lord. As such, that bond of loyalty did not extend beyond the lord. One had to obey one's lord because he was one's lord and not because he was a mwami's representative. This is why any feudal system has always been so dangerous for a central government. Independence and revolt against the king have been recurring events in the areas where a feudal system existed.

Ruanda rulers were able to check successfully these tendencies

10: Albert E-5 (1956-1957)1963
FO42 Rundi FO42

its own rules, if each infraction were punished strictly according to prescribed sanctions and if all the formal norms were always respected. To be a part of a society is to know which of its rules prescribe or prohibit absolutely or conditionally; whether a particular action which is not forbidden is nevertheless something that is simply "not done"; whether human beings, always imperfect, must in any particular case actually be punished or whether the offence should blinked. Exceptions to the formal rules are not haphazard. Rather, they are ordered by what may be called implicit norms, or secondary or functional norms. These are as well known and as well established as norms which are explicit and formal. Taken together, the explicit, primary norms and the implicit, secondary norms form the "active norms" of the society. By means of secondary norms, society can come to terms with the social and psychological impossibility of a perfect correspondence between the formal norms of the social structure, invented by men in the interest of social order, and the actions of men confronted by the empirical realities of human existence.

Each society has its own calculus of values by which it establishes its active norms, the norms to be respected verbally but understood to be neither practical nor practised, and the rules of punishment which are to be taken seriously. It will not be possible to understand the life of the women of Burundi without knowing both the formal norms of the social structure and the secondary, functional norms. The life of a Rundikazi is made up of various elements. To reconstruct it, we shall begin with a description of women as members of Rundi society, of which they form an integral part. We shall then describe women in the specifically feminine roles, and we shall conclude with an account of the devices used by women to realize the values of their patriarchal society.

* * *

The Rundi describe their society as a hierarchy ordered by *Imana*, the Supreme Being, who is at its summit. Among human beings, it is the *mwami*, the king, who is superior to all. In the past, there was also Kiranga, the legendary head of a possession cult. He was said to be of approximately the same rank as the *mwami*.[5] Immediately below the king are the *baganwa*, the princes—four generations of the descendents of a king. The *mwami* and the *baganwa* are the rulers of the Rundi. In the traditional system, the power of the *mwami* was defined by his inheritence of absolute royal power and of the entire country, together with all its goods,

10:Albert E-5 (1956-1957)1963
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as his private property. No Rundi had rights, power, lands, or cows, except as the *mwami* granted. He distributed his lands and cows and administrative power to those of his brothers and parallel cousins who were on his side in the political battles. These *baganwa*, today called "chiefs", become the vassals of the *mwami*. The *baganwa* distributed the lands and cows they received to *batware*, captains, today called "sub-chiefs", who became their vassals and who in turn procured vassals for themselves by giving to their inferiors small plots of land and a cow here and there. Changes resulting from European influence are gradually eliminating the feudal characteristics of the social system. However, the principle and the order of the hierarchy have so far remained unchanged.

Below the princes in the hierarchy are the *abafasoni*, nobles, those who were once princes but who at the fifth generation are so no longer and who will one day be numbered among the commoners. To describe the commoners, it is necessary to take account of the three *aboko*, castes—the Tutsi, the Hutu and the Twa.[6] The Tutsi are by far of the highest rank among the commoners. Although they make up only ten per cent of the population, they are the masters of the Hutu, who make up more than 85 per cent of the population. It is believed that the Tutsi are of Hamitic or Nilo-Hamitic origin, whereas the Hutu are clearly a part of the Bantu hoe-culture, characteristic of East and Central Africa.[7] Burundi is beyond doubt a "cattle-complex" country. The Tutsi are herders, and nobody debates the superiority of the herders. It is said that the Tutsi, once formidable warriors, on their arrival in the country about three centuries ago, had no need to conquer the Hutu by using their spears. The Hutu to this day willingly become the serfs of the herders in order to receive cows from them. Between the princes and the Tutsi, there is very little difference in rank. Between the rank of the Tutsi and that of the Hutu, there is a very great difference. The Tutsi and the Tutsikazi disdain the Hutu and the Hutukazi, considering them their born servants. Nevertheless, the princes or the king sometimes appoint Hutu to be *batware*. A Hutu thus honoured is the political superior of the Tutsi under his authority. This circumstance in no way modifies his social inferiority. On the contrary, it exacerbates race prejudice. No social mechanism can change the caste in which an individual is born. The Tutsi do not drink with the Hutu, even when they become administrators, for one does not drink with one's social inferiors. The next downward step in the hierarchy takes us to the bottom of the social ladder and almost outside the society to the

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